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### **The role of smart technologies in decision making: developing, supporting and training smart consumers**

Market forces and technological advancements are making the management of and strategies for innovation more prominent and essential in all functions of business, not least marketing and retailing. Notwithstanding an increasing number of recent articles on the future of retailing as prompted by the continuous evolution in technology (Davenport et al., 2019; Grewal, Motyka and Levy, 2019; Hoffman and Novak, 2018; Kannan and Li, 2017; von Briel, 2018; Willems et al., 2017), this is a field where research opportunities with potential managerial and theoretical implications are attractively wide-open. Thus, the frontiers of marketing are constantly pushed further, requiring the development and adjustments of new theories. Prior literature on innovation in marketing has mainly focused on digital marketing strategies (Pantano and Vannucci, 2019) and consumer behavior (Bertacchini et al., 2017; Inman and Nikolova, 2017), while only recently introducing the notion of smart retailing in terms of smart experience and interaction (Dacko, 2017; Pantano et al., 2018; Roy et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2017). While these studies provide a theory basis for defining smart retailing and consumer behaviour in smart retail settings, the concept of smart consumers, as those consumers making extensive use of smart technologies in all steps of their shopping behavior and experience of the store (either offline and online), is still under-investigated. Thus, the smart consumer is emerging as a promising area for future marketing and retailing studies.

To the aim of examining the usage of smart technologies from a marketing and retail perspective, this special issue provides new approaches to the disciplines as prompted by the continuous advancements in the technology. Its main focus rests on smart technologies in consumer behavior through a more comprehensive and contemporary perspective, which blends marketing and retailing with other disciplines such as psychology, media studies and sociology. Seeking to understand the effect of innovation in consumer behavior, the editor developed this special issue proposing original empirical and theoretical contributions, methods, models, tools and case studies that contribute to explain this emergent phenomenon.

From the large amount of papers submitted into the review process, we present the following seven contributions. In the first paper, Mulcahy and colleagues focus on consumers' preparedness to a specific smart technology, by investigating the specific characteristics of technology readiness, consumer engagement, and perceived risk and trust. Findings demonstrate the extent to which their opinions and imagined experiences with smart home technology have a causal direct impact on the intention to effectively adoption.

In the second paper, Brill, Munoz and Miller investigate consumers' interaction specifically advanced artificial intelligence systems as digital assistants and similar, by identifying consumers' expectations from the new interaction. Results highlight that especially these expectations and the confirmation of them have a significant role on consumers' satisfaction with the digital assistants.

In the third paper, Rese, Schlee and Baier focus on fast fashion retail settings, in order to understand in which services and technologies for the physical store retailer should invest. Findings demonstrate that generation Y generally prefers service improvements rather than technology improvements.

Similarly, in the fourth paper, Mani and Chouk evaluates the drivers of consumers' resistance to smart services, by focusing on a privacy perspective. Results figure out the role of information

privacy, the unauthorized secondary use of personal information and perceived intrusion have a causal impact on consumers resistance, in a sort of “big brother effect”.

In the fifth paper, Roy and colleagues explore smart consumers who voluntarily engage in value creation activities. Results conceptualise smart experience co-creation (SEC) and the smart servicescape, by showing the extent to which the technological environment cues of the smart servicescape have a direct influence on the smart experience co-creation, and the emerging co-created experience might influence consumers’ service brand equity and word-of-mouth communication.

In the sixth paper, van de Sanden, Willems and Brengman examine beacon technology to understand the benefits for in-store location-based marketing in general, and smart retailing in particular. Findings further support the identification of smart ways of engaging with consumers in store through location-sensitive messages.

Finally, Fuentes defines the figure of smart consumers as a new type of actor emerged from the connection and *hybridization* of consumers and smart devices, by specifically identifying when and under what conditions the enactment of smart consumer fails.

Taken together, these contributions illustrate how smart technologies come to occupy a central role in retailing and consumer behavior literature for a variety of aspects that keep together practical notions of access to the store, consumer engagement and experience with the new forms of interaction that are at stake with the more social side of the shopping activity. Technology in this context seems to become an integrative part of consumer experience, by impacting the traditional cultures of shopping, becoming the critical issue to the understanding of present and future developments in marketing studies. This Special Issue provides an initial account of these developments, hoping to stimulate further interdisciplinary research on the topic.

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